

Minnesota and Wisconsin and adjoining States; Ontario with Michigan, Ohio, Pennsylvania and New York; Quebec and the Maritime Provinces with New York and the New England States. Our wheat and other grains would be ground in the United States mills, and our export trade in flour and other foodstuffs would be ruined. The inflow of United States capital to Canada would be stopped, and the disturbance of our trade and trade channels would be widespread and revolutionary; but more than that, our freedom to develop our own resources, in our own way, and by our own people, would be curtailed and hampered, and our hands would be tied by an agreement with a foreign nation who would look after their own interests first, last and always. But still more, our Canadian nationality, our proud position and our influence as a unit in the great British Empire would be diminished, our trade with Great Britain would be lessened, and our hopes of trade preference within the Empire would be frustrated, the ties which bind us to Great Britain would be weakened, and the strongly and clearly expressed desire in the United States, that the Stars and Stripes may float over Canada instead of our own beloved flag would be nearer of accomplishment."

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Mr. Lash combatted the claim that the Liberal party was committed to reciprocity, and had been since Confederation. The clause in the Tariff Act of 1879 had long since been abrogated.

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Continuing, Mr. Lash said: "When we realized what had been done, and what it would mean to Canadian autonomy and nationality, five or six of us Liberals met to discuss the crisis, for a crisis it is. We were loth to differ from our party leaders, but we felt that if ever Canadians were called upon to place country before party, now was the time. We felt that, as members of the Liberal party in 1911, we were not committed to this policy of reciprocity, and that the Government had no right to assume to commit the party or the country to it. We felt that the question was not whether industries or interests or individuals or sections of this country would be benefitted or injured by this agreement. The true question was that of Canadian nationality and autonomy, and we believed that it was the duty of all true Canadians to look at it in this way, and to decide it upon these principles, and not upon the balance of profits or losses to classes or interests. To us it was not a party question; it was something above and beyond any party; and we decided to oppose it upon these grounds, and to come out in the open and do so.

"We had further meetings to discuss the agreement and the results of it to the material interests of Canada and of her people, and we became convinced that any benefits to one class